THE EMRC CIRCULAR

LET'S GO CIRCULAR
EMRC

EASTERN METROPOLITAN REGIONAL COUNCIL
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Front cover: EMRC all-purpose Soil Conditioner on display at the Waste and Recycle Conference 2021

1. Message from EMRC CEO Marcus Geisler

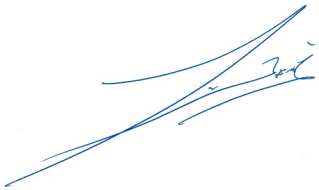
I'm happy to report that several key developments across the EMRC have reinforced our commitment to Western Australia's Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy. Already it's clear we hit the ground running at the start of FY 2021/2022.

Our strong presence at the Waste & Recycling Conference 2021, attended by WA's leading waste management pioneers, provided the EMRC with an important means of demonstrating the impressive progress made on several fronts, not least our commitment to our own FOGO Strategy. Two weeks later, our messaging was reinforced at the WALGA presentation on outcomes and actions from the EMRC Circular Economy Masterclass. Our impressive new display stand again provided a focal point for Local Government officers keen to discover the latest thinking on developments in the fields of waste management and waste education.

To reflect our commitment to the Circular Economy, we've renamed this newsletter 'The EMRC Circular' – a definition of the word 'circular' being 'a publication meant for distribution among a large number of people'. In this issue we can proudly report on an excellent example of the practical and environmental benefits of the Circular Economy with our Methane Gas Extraction Program – a EMRC success story which has been in operation for nearly three decades.

In each edition, we'll be profiling initiatives which deserve an EMRC Circular Economy Action Award. Look out for further profiles demonstrating how the EMRC is obtaining positive results from its commitment to this all-important concept.

Elsewhere, the good news keeps coming as we report on the success of Sustainability's Flood Aware Be Prepared public awareness campaign and the successful cooperation and commitment shown by the EMRC is its coordination of the ever-popular Avon Descent Family Fun Days.



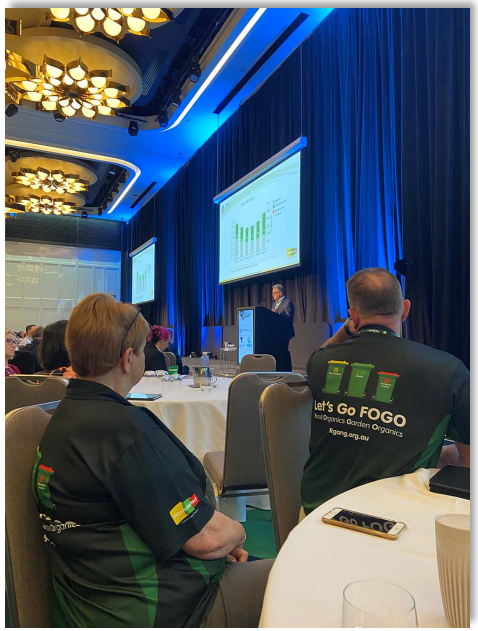
Marcus Geisler
EMRC Chief Executive Officer

2. Waste & Recycle Conference 2021

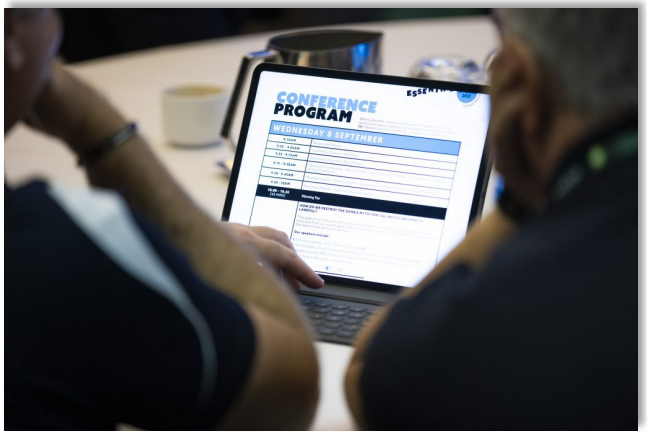
Open for business: The Waste & Recycle Conference 2021, the keynote gathering of WA's waste industry professionals, opened its doors at Crown Perth on Wednesday 8 September 2021 with a packed two-day program of resource recovery and waste management presentations.

EMRC team members joined CEO Marcus Geisler in declaring the newly-redesigned EMRC conference stand open at 9:00am. Marcus was among a host of industry leaders presenting at the conference, reporting on the outcomes and actions from the EMRC Circular Economy Masterclass held in June 2021.

Samples of the EMRC's all-purpose soil conditioner, created from FOGO material, were on display and generated much positive comment. Pictured left is Red Hill Waste Management Facility Manager Tanya Beinhauer (second left) with the members of the EMRC Executive Leadership Team: Brad Lacey, Chief Operating Officer, CEO Marcus Geisler, Chief Sustainability Officer Wendy Harris, Chief Financial Officer Hua Jer Liew and Chief Projects Officer Doug Bruce.



WASTE & RECYCLE 2021 CONFERENCE PROGRAM
WASTE&RECYCLE
CONFERENCE
What is
ESSENTIAL?
8-10
SEPTEMBER
2021
CROWN PERTH
The Waste & Recycle conference will once again be held at Crown Towers, Perth from 8-9 September 2021 with tours being hosted on 10 September. The Conference theme this year is 'What is Essential?'
The Conference, hosted by the Waste Management and Resource Recovery Association of Australia (WMRR), Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER), and Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA), is still the leading waste and resource recovery event in Western Australia.



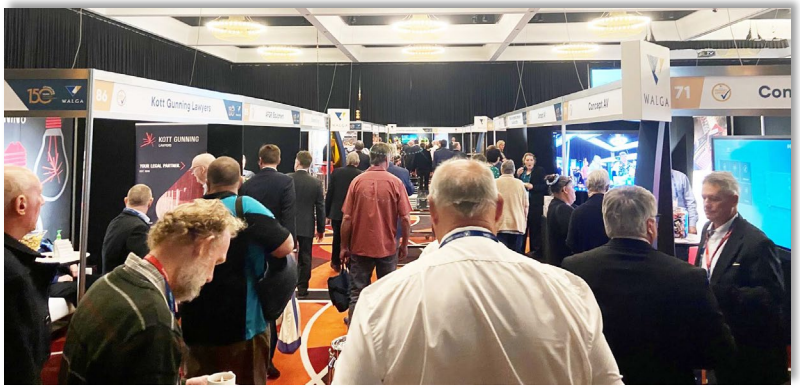
3. WALGA Convention and Exhibition 2021

The EMRC's new display stand made its second appearance in two weeks at the 2021 WA Local Government Convention at Crown Perth, commencing on 19 September 2021. With its title of *'Leading the WAY: Looking Forward, Looking Back'*, the Convention offered a selection of presentations aimed at assisting Local Government representatives embrace change and adopt a forward thinking mindset for the benefit our their communities.

The EMRC stand provided a focal point for delegates keen to learn more about the latest developments on Sustainability, the Circular Economy and Resource Recovery and how working together with State and Local Government makes a difference for both Perth's Eastern Region and Western Australia.

EMRC Councillor Mel Congerton *(pictured left with EMRC CEO Marcus Geisler)* was one of the many visitors to the EMRC stand.

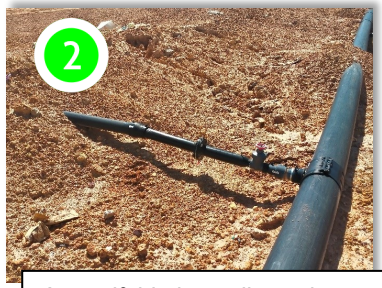
In another demonstration of the gathering speed of the waste avoidance revolution, the EMRC has abandoned printed sales and promotional material and instead pre-loaded a range of useful information onto FOGO bin-shaped USB devices (*pictured bottom left)* – providing a unique, practical and easy to carry 'brand in the hand'



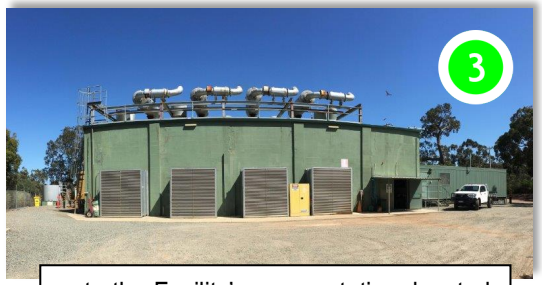
4. Methane gas extraction – a Circular Economy success story

In 1992, Western Australia's first landfill power station opened at the Red Hill Waste Management Facility. For nearly three decades it has created electricity from methane collected on site, preventing the release of this highly toxic greenhouse gas into the atmosphere and instead generating enough energy to power thousands of homes. It's an impressive example of the Circular Economy in action. Here's how it works:

Drilling equipment, pictured here in late September, is brought in to extract methane from landfill

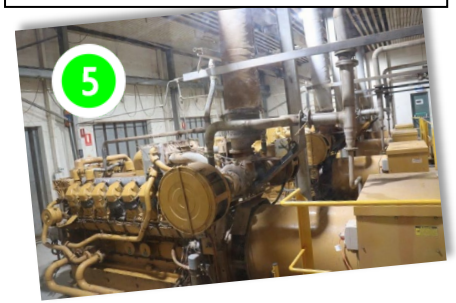


A manifold pipe collects the gas and pumps it by vacuum…



…to the Facility's power station, located at the northwest corner of the site.

The manifold connects to a scrubbing station which removes contamination…



…and clean gas enters the engine room, where four motors convert the gas into power.

An array of external tanks work like a car's radiator, cooling the water used in power generation…

…while the power station's control room ensures everything runs at maximum efficiency.

The Red Hill Waste Management Facility power station is capable of generating up to 3.5mW, enough to power thousands of homes…

…and is a worthy winner of this this issue's Circular Economy In Action Award!

5. Record-breaking rainfall boosts EMRC-coordinated Flood Aware Be Prepared campaign

Flooding caused by the wettest July in decades has given extra momentum to a timely community awareness campaign promoting the benefits of advanced planning to increase community safety and reduce the risk of flood damage.

The eight-week Flood Aware Be Prepared campaign was launched on Tuesday 27 July 2021 by the EMRC.

The Bureau of Meteorology officially described July as 'very wet' across Greater Perth with many sites recording either their wettest July on record or wettest July for more than 20 years. Total average rainfall for the Perth Metropolitan region was 271.4mm, which is 185% of the long-term average of 146. 8mm.The Region received 0.2mm or higher on 28 of 31 days.

The Flood Aware Be Prepared campaign continues to provide participating Councils in Perth's Eastern Region and other riverside local governments with tools and messaging to communicate to their residents, businesses and the general community. The campaign has been enthusiastically welcomed, with online videos, outdoor advertising and an extensive social media campaign all playing their part in spreading the message about flood risk mitigation.

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EMRC CEO Marcus Geisler said, 'The success of the campaign is the welcome outcome of intensive work carried out by participating councils, DFES and our consultants BMT Group. One of our videos reached more than 17.3 K viewers and it is remarkable to see how the community is appreciating the Flood Aware Be Prepared Campaign as it develops.

'Together our aim is to increase community awareness of the hazards of flooding, with practical suggestions for householders located in more vulnerable areas by the Swan and Helena Rivers.'

He continued, 'Our recent unusually-high rainfall has underlined the potential of floods to devastate our communities, homes and infrastructure, not to mention hugely-increased risks to our people, pets and other animals.'

The 'Flood Aware. Be Prepared' campaign videos and brochures are available to view and download at www.floodawarebeprepared.com.au .

6. Avon Descent Family Fun Days hailed a great success thanks to support from Lotterywest

The Avon Descent Family Fun Days weekend of 13-15 August 2021, supported by Lotterywest, were a resounding success.

The EMRC, on behalf of the participating Councils, received $163,000 in Lotterywest grant support for the three-day program.

The support from Lotterywest's grant enabled communities in the EMRC member Councils City of Bayswater and City of Swan, together with the Shires of Northam and Toodyay, to come together for connection, recreation and to enjoy free and low-cost activities, entertainment and food at the Family Fun Day events. The Family Fun Days also represented an opportunity to encourage tourism, helping to build community resilience to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19.

The grant also supported part of the overall marketing campaign for the community events, which was organised and run by the EMRC over a ten-week period. The regional campaign aimed to encourage event attendance, provide regional collaboration and promote the liveability and attractiveness of Perth's Eastern Region. The campaign was very successful with over 150,000 people in attending over the weekend. The 2021 campaign materials were modernised with fresh new graphics which appeared on bus backs *(left)* and elsewhere, generating very positive comments.

To celebrate the 2021 Family Fun Days Events, the EMRC ran a competition, offering the prize of a brand-new stand-up paddle board which was collected by the Cleveland family *(pictured top right)* at the City of Bayswater Avon Descent Finish Line Family Fun Day.

The EMRC would like to thank and acknowledge Lotterywest, Northam's Avon Descent Association, Shire of Northam, Shire of Toodyay, City of Swan and City of Bayswater for their organisational support and contributions towards this incredible three day journey, and to all who participated.

7. EMRC's 'Big Blue' makes his debut

Hazelmere Resource Recovery Park's new forklift – nicknamed 'Big Blue' – is already earning his living by creating impressive efficiencies both for the EMRC and its customers.

Using state of the art technologies, the machine's advanced on-board electronics combine with vastly-improved lifting power to cut waiting times, shift larger loads and provide increased driver comfort.

Safety features include a front-mounted external camera which scans for reflective material, such as hi-viz gear. When detected, a buzzer alerts the driver to any potential hazard. Shortly after entering service, Big Blue poses for the camera *(left)* and *(right)* demonstrates his lifting power.

8. Zoe's 15 years' service celebrated

Chief Operating Officer Brad Lacey *(left)* congratulates Red Hill Waste Management Facility Administration Officer Zoe Williamson on reaching 15 years' service.

Joining the EMRC in 2006 as a casual Administration Officer, Zoe was promoted to her current role in 2008. One of her first achievements was to produce a Procedures Manual for both the Administration and Weighbridge Divisions. She currently provides valuable administration support to the Hazelmere Resource Recovery Park and the Shire of Mundaring Community Transfer Stations.

Well done Zoe from all of us at the EMRC!

9. EMRC staff Lunch and Learn workshops promote waste reduction initiatives

The EMRC Waste Education Team has been busy delivering five successful 'Lunch and Learn' workshops in celebration of Plastic Free July and Keep Australia Beautiful week.

The aim of the workshops was to increase awareness about the harmful impacts of single-use plastics, encourage EMRC staff to rethink waste in their personal lives and to collaboratively brainstorm ways to make the workplace more sustainable, with a particular focus on Circular Economy-orientated solutions. Several topics were explored, including how to avoid single-use disposable items and replace them with sustainable swaps, what can and can't be accepted by kerbside recycling bins and which improvements the EMRC can consider in order to help the community reach a net zero target by 2040.

Lots of ideas, questions and experiences were shared throughout the series, with much enthusiasm and excitement from staff toward making sustainable improvements in both their own lives and our workplace. A big thank you to Sweet Dream Foods and Toast My Curry for providing low-waste catering, amazing customer service and supporting the EMRC's initiative of using no single-use disposable coffee cups or take away containers. It was a nice way to celebrate and a good experience for EMRC employees to learn the habit of Bring Your Own (BYO).

Below left to right: Waste Education Team Members Isabelle Marie, Shayde Holbrey, Abigail Jones and Casey Murphy get ready to spread the good news on sustainability.

10. EMRC Council, Agenda Briefing Forum and Committee meeting dates

EMRC Special Council Meeting, Council, Agenda Briefing Forum and Committee meeting dates for the remainder of 2021 are as follows.

A **Special Council Meeting** will be held on 4 November 2021 commencing at 5:00pm to elect a Chairman and Deputy Chairman, and to nominate members to the various committees following the Local Government Elections.

Ordinary Council Meetings commence at 6:00pm and are held on the fourth Thursday of each month from February to November, except for October due to the 2021 Local Government elections.

Thursday	25 November	(if required)	at	EMRC Administration Office

Agenda Briefing Forums commence at 6:00pm and are held on the second Thursday of each month from February to November, except for October due to Local Government elections.

Thursday	11 November	(if required)	at	EMRC Administration Office

Audit Committee Meetings commence at 6:00pm and are generally held three weeks prior to Council meetings.

Thursday	4 November	(if required)	at	EMRC Administration Office

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